

Claims:

1. A method for providing telephony services through the Internet, the method comprising steps of:

5 by a host connected to a phone line, providing access to the phone line through the internet;

by a server available through the Internet, communicating with the host and with clients through the Internet to provide clients access to phone services.

2. A server accessible through the Internet, the server providing 10 access control to a remote client that accesses phone services through a host computer to provide the remote client with phone services available at the host computer.

3. The server of claim 2, wherein the server provides one or more of 15 the following services: authentication, tunneling, initiation of peer-to-peer communication, routing, directory, directory search, and access rights.

4. A host having access to a local phone service and an Internet connection, the host providing Internet server-enabled access to the local phone service via an internet connection by permitting a client to utilize the local phone service.

20 5. The host of claim 4, wherein the server comprises a client.

6. The host of claim 4, wherein the server controls client access to the host.

7. The host of claim 2, wherein the server provides one or more of the 25 following services: directory search, voicemail and missed calls, call answering, and call initiation.

8. A client enabled to access a phone service through an Internet connection, the client having functions for requesting access to the local phone service, and for performing communications through an established connection.

30 9. The client of claim 8, wherein the client provides one or more of the following services: phone line interface, authentication, verification, call

forwarding, call answering, voice mail and missed calls, and local-call routing.

10. A system for providing phone services to Internet users through the Internet, the system comprising:

5 one or more host computers, each host computer having access to a local phone service;

at least one server that controls access between said one or more host computers and phone service clients seeking to access phone services through the Internet.

10 11. A business method, the method comprising charging clients for access to the system of claim 10.

12. A business method, the method comprising providing virtual local phone service for a fee by providing a simulation of local phone service to remote clients through the Internet.